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ABSTRACT

The study sought to ascertain faculty perceptions of their own grading practices, opinions of what grading standards ought to be, and knowledge of how other disciplines grade. Opinions were gathered by a survey of teaching faculty at Georgia State University. Analysis revealed that faculty opinions about grading are strongly associated with academic discipline. Faculty in those disciplines emphasizing factual and cumulative course content tend to feel that grades in their discipline are lower than those in other disciplines, tend to emphasize written tests and quizzes to evaluate students, and tend to express confidence in the letter grading system. Faculty in the fine arts, education, and the health professions have less confidence in the conventional grading system, hold that a B grade indicates average performance, and use nonquantified factors (such as attitude and effort) in assigning students' grades. Faculty with greater seniority tend to have stronger opinions about grading practices. The analyses are narrative, with data tabulations and the survey instrument (Appendix A) appended. (Author/MSE)

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FACULTY OPINIONS ON GRADING STANDARDS AND PRACTICES GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Report No. 78-22

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and
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Office of Institutional Planning
Georgia State University
June, 1978

Abstract

This study sought to ascertain faculty perceptions of their own grading practices, their opinions of what grading standards ought to be, and knowledge of how other disciplines grade. Opinions were gathered by a survey of teaching faculty (N=1021) at Georgia State University. More than 1200 questionnaires were distributed through campus mail during April, 1977; 514 were returned.

The analysis revealed that faculty opinions about grading are strongly associated with academic discipline. Faculty in those disciplines which emphasize factual and cumulative course content tend to feel that grades in their discipline are lower than those in other disciplines, to emphasize written tests and quizzes to evaluate students, and express confidence in the letter-based grading system. Faculty members in fine arts, education, and the health professions tend to have less confidence in the conventional grading system, hold that a 'B' grade indicates average performance, and use non-quantified factors--such as attitude and effort--in assigning students' grades. The faculty with higher seniority status tend to have stronger and more rigorous opinions of grading.

This survey was the final segment of a six-part series on grades at Georgia State University. The previous research studies, using controls for student ability and programs of study, analyzed actual grading practices and found definite differences in grades assigned by different disciplines. The results of the study showed that the faculty is very much aware of such differences.

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Introduction and Purpose

In the grading controversy, attention has often focused on the grading practices of individual faculty members. A decline in scholastic ability examination scores concurrent with an increase in average grades during the late 1960's and early 1970's is used as evidence that poorer students are receiving higher grades, and it has been maintained that the individual faculty member is, to a large degree, responsible. There is little empirical evidence, however, to support this contention about a change in faculty grading standards.

To understand the grading process, all of the components which interact and affect the process should be studied. Higher education has recently undergone many dramatic changes including a diversification of degree program requirements, more heterogeneous student populations, and changes in faculty characteristics, with all of these changes affecting the grading process. In studying grades, it is necessary to disaggregate and study the effect of the curriculum, students and faculty.

This study is part of a series of grade studies which have analyzed grades empirically on the undergraduate and graduate level, by faculty characteristics, by student characteristics, by individual courses, and by major fields of study. Each study analyzed one aspect of grading to ascertain its contribution to trends in the grading process.

Based upon an opinion survey, this final study of the six-part series specifically focuses on the faculty perceptions of grading. The aims of the analysis are:

1. To ascertain faculty opinions about their grading practices, their philosophies of grading, and their perceptions of how other faculty members grade.

2. To determine if there is an association between academic discipline and faculty opinions.

3. To investigate for any association between seniority of faculty members and their opinions.

4. To compare the stated grading practices of the faculty with their actual practices.

5. To add to the empirical understanding of grading practices.

Review of the Literature

Based on grading practices and philosophies, three basic stereotypes of faculty members have been categorized by Dressel (1961). "Traditionalists" emphasize the formal, objective measurement of knowledge. They are most likely to criticize lax grading practices which they regard as currently affecting the quality of higher education. "Eclectics" view the college experience as a pluralistic one which requires that grading standards recognize differing student backgrounds and interests. They still claim to adhere to sound grading standards, however. The third group, the "relativists," views education as a continuing process of improvement and considers grading a harmful exercise which interferes with actual learning. Etzioni (1975) felt that a decline in standards can result from the attempted mixture of these traditional and progressive concepts into one system.

Among the investigations which sampled faculty opinions about grading, the works of Ladd and Lipset (1977), the Georgia State University Self-Study (1977), McDonald (1967), and Oh (1976) are representative.

The recent national survey of faculty opinions analyzed by Ladd and Lipset found that more than 90 percent of the respondents felt that grade inflation was "a serious concern." A majority agreed that academic standards had recently declined. Those representing institutions with less stringent entrance requirements expressed the greatest concern over the decline. At Georgia State University (1977), a survey conducted during accreditation found that 76 percent of the respondents felt grades were too high. McDonald (1967) found that faculty members at Georgia State College (now Georgia State University) stated that their grading standards were absolute; however, their grades did not show an upward adjustment as the ability of their students increased.

Oh (1976) found that academic discipline is strongly associated with faculty opinions about grading practices. Those in the natural sciences were most confident of their grading practices while the faculty in humanities were less confident. Also, the faculty in natural sciences generally disagreed with the notion of adjusting the course level and content each quarter to the level of the students while the faculty in social sciences and humanities tended to favor adjustment.

An empirical test of grading practices by Goldman, Schmidt, Hewitt, and Fisher (1974) found evidence of relative grading practices: courses enrolling mostly lower scholastic ability students tend to have higher grades than courses enrolling predominantly upper aptitude students, controlling for scholastic ability.

One of the studies in this grade series specifically analyzed grades by faculty characteristics (Prather and Smith, 1976). A strong association was found between academic discipline and faculty grading

patterns even after controlling for faculty professional and background characteristics.

Research Design

Survey Instrument

Questions for the study were developed to measure faculty opinions of their grading philosophies, their grading patterns and their knowledge of how grades vary between disciplines at Georgia State University. Opinions on grading often involve complex interactions and are too complicated to reduce into questions with short, restricted answers. Closed-end choices were necessary, however, to standardize responses.

Some questions were adapted from the Georgia State College faculty survey conducted by McDonald (1967) and the Western Michigan faculty survey directed by Oh (1976). The present survey was initially pretested to check the suitability of the questions. Suggestions were incorporated and a copy of the final survey instrument is presented in Appendix A.

Sample

More than 1200 questionnaires were distributed through campus mail during April, 1977. Of 1021 faculty teaching that quarter, 514 returned questionnaires.

To determine how representative the sample was of the total faculty population, a goodness-of-fit analysis (Chi-square) was performed (Table 1). Analyzed by rank, full professors, associate professors, and instructors appeared to be oversampled while assistant professors and part-time faculty were undersampled. Graduate Teaching Assistant response was in proportion

to the total GTA population. Demographic characteristics of the respondents are summarized in Appendix B.

Table I
Chi Square Analysis

Faculty Sample Compared with Faculty Population
by Rank

	Sample	Population
Full professors	20%	17%
Associate professors	29%	23%
Assistant professors	25%	26%
Instructors	6%	4%
Graduate teaching assistants	10%	10%
Part-time faculty	10%	20%
Total N	543	1021

$X^2 = 28.40$ $df = 5$ $p < .001$

Method of Analysis

The analysis consists of cross-classifying faculty opinions with faculty characteristics. These cross-tabulations are on file in the Office of Institutional Planning and may be reviewed upon request. This report presents statistically significant findings summarized from the individual Tables. A condensation of the faculty opinions is presented in Appendix C, and a directory to the entire set of tables is given in Appendix D.

Results

Opinions of Grading by Discipline

Grading Variations Across Disciplines. As summarized above, earlier studies of grading practices at this university and other institutions have found that there are definite differences in the grades assigned in different disciplines. The results of this study show that faculty members are aware of these variations. When asked to what extent the meaning of a letter grade varies between disciplines at GSU, approximately half of the faculty state that the meaning varies "greatly." Faculty in the physical sciences, social sciences, and education tend to see the most variation between disciplines.

By contrast, one quarter of the faculty find "great" variation in grading within their discipline. Faculty in the physical sciences tend to feel there is little variation in grading within that field. Many faculty teaching graduate courses in education hold the opinion that there is a great deal of grading variation within their field.

Approximately one-third of the faculty say they do not know how grades in their discipline compare with grades in other disciplines. The other two-thirds show large differences by discipline in the perception faculty members have on this subject. Most faculty in physical sciences feel their discipline grades "lowest" in comparison with other disciplines. Most faculty in business and social sciences also think their discipline grades relatively "low." The faculty in education and health tend to feel their disciplines grade "high" in comparison with other disciplines.

Some faculty are also unsure how their own grades compare with grades in other disciplines. Of those with an opinion on the subject,

faculty in the physical sciences, business, and social sciences tend to feel they grade "low" in comparison with other disciplines while faculty in education and fine arts feel they grade "high."

In general, the faculty are more certain of how their own grades compare with other grades in their discipline. A higher percentage of graduate faculty than undergraduate faculty say their own grades are approximately the same as overall grades in their discipline. This is to be expected since the range for graduate grades is smaller than that for undergraduate grades.

A majority of the faculty feel that a department should set standards of performance. Faculty members teaching undergraduate courses in fine arts and health have the highest percentage who think a department should set standards. Students in fine arts are expected to meet artistic performance standards and those in health are expected to comply with clearly defined medical performance standards.

There is considerable variation among the disciplines on the question of whether a 'B' grade means average performance. Faculty teaching undergraduate courses in physical sciences, letters, and social sciences tend to disagree that 'B' is average. The highest percent of undergraduate faculty who feel 'B' is average is in education. Faculty in graduate courses consider 'B' a measure of average performance more than faculty of undergraduate courses do.

Grading Practices. The faculty were questioned about their individual grading practices. When asked to rank factors in the order of importance in determining a student's final grade, 58 percent of those

teaching undergraduate courses and 35 percent of those teaching graduate courses list tests and quizzes as the most important factor. Faculty teaching undergraduates rank these factors in order of importance: tests and quizzes, final examination, written assignments, class participation, attitude and effort, and attendance. The graduate faculty rank the factors similarly except that they consider written assignments more important than final examinations.

There are differences by discipline in the way faculty rank the above factors. Faculty in the physical sciences are highest in the percent who consider tests and quizzes most important. Faculty in education and letters tend to rank written assignments as most important and the faculty in fine arts feel that class participation and attitude are the primary factors in assigning a student's final grade. Faculty in business tend to rely on final examinations in assigning grades.

The faculty were asked what type of class presentation they use "primarily." Graduate faculty tend to use discussion primarily while undergraduate faculty tend to lecture more frequently. Faculty teaching physical sciences are highest in the use of lecture while those in fine arts, letters, and education are lowest in this regard.

When asked the type of scale used in assigning a student's final grade, the majority of the faculty report the use of an "absolute scale." "Absolute scale" was defined as follows: "each student's performance is judged as a definite percent of perfection of achievement and is independent of the performance of other students. It is possible for each student to receive an excellent rating." Other possible choices of grading scales were the "relative" scale and the "peer" scale. Faculty teaching undergraduate business courses are lowest in the use of the

"absolute" scale and highest in the use of "relative" scales.

The faculty were then asked to estimate the percent of their grading based upon "objective" or "subjective" criteria. The majority of faculty report that more than 75 percent of their grading is based on "objective" criteria. Of all the disciplines, fine arts faculty use objective criteria the least while the faculty in the physical sciences use it the most.

Asked if they adjust the content and level of academic material to the nature and level of the students enrolled each quarter, the majority of faculty members say they do not adjust each quarter. This finding is to be expected since the majority say they use an absolute scale based on objective criteria when grading. The faculty in education have the highest percent who do adjust the level of academic material each quarter while the faculty in fine arts often have no opinion on the subject.

Grading Philosophies. Eighty-eight percent of the faculty respondents feel that the grades they assign accurately reflect the level of knowledge a student has attained. By contrast, only 50 percent feel that grades "in general" reflect a student's ability. Faculty teaching courses in education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels have the highest percent who believe grades do not reflect ability.

Asked what type of grading system should be used at GSU, three-fourths of the faculty opt for the "conventional grading system" rather than the "pass-fail system," "no grade system," or "other." Fourteen percent of the faculty teaching graduate courses want a "pass-fail system" as compared to four percent of faculty teaching undergraduate courses. A relatively high percent of the faculty in fine arts

propose "other" types of grading systems. About 75 percent of the faculty say they do not want to do away with the present grading structure.

Eighty-four percent of the faculty feel that GSU students are a heterogeneous group in academic ability. There is virtual agreement on this question except for the faculty in fine arts which consider the student body more homogenous in academic ability.

Approximately half of the faculty express the opinion that, on the basis of performance, GSU students are "average." Faculty teaching undergraduate courses most frequently feel students are "average."

The faculty were asked whether they conceive of knowledge as a process and also whether they conceive of knowledge as a product. Eighty percent consider knowledge an ongoing process and 50 percent consider knowledge as an end product. Faculty in education are highest of the disciplines in the proportion who consider knowledge as both a process and a product.

Eighty-nine percent of the faculty state that a primary purpose of grading is to "describe" performance levels for students while fifty percent feel a primary purpose is to "motivate" students. Faculty teaching graduate courses in physical sciences and business are relatively high in seeing motivation as a primary purpose of grades.

Opinions of Grading by Seniority

There are several generalizations concerning the opinions of the faculty when grouped by the seniority variables. First, the older, the higher ranked, the tenured, those with the highest degrees, and those with the most years of teaching in higher education all tend to share similar opinions. The younger, lower ranked, non-tenured faculty with

lower degrees and few years of teaching in higher education also tend to share similar opinions. Female faculty members at GSU are generally younger than males and are therefore often in the lower seniority group. The lower seniority group tends to be less sure of grading practices, philosophies, and variations between disciplines in grading at Georgia State as evidenced by the large percentages of "don't know" answers. Also, faculty with first professional degrees often have different opinions and grading practices from faculty with master's and doctorate degrees.

There are some interesting findings by seniority. In general, as seniority increases, the tendency to adjust the content and level of academic material each quarter to the nature and level of students decreases. Also as seniority increases, the use of objective criteria decreases.

Summary

This report was based upon an opinion survey of Georgia State University faculty grading standards and practices. The survey solicited opinions from the entire teaching faculty on their individual grading practices, their grading philosophies, and their perception of how grades differ between disciplines at Georgia State. The analysis cross-classified opinions with demographic characteristics of the faculty. Approximately 50 percent of the teaching faculty responded to the survey, with full professors, associate professors, and instructors slightly over-represented in the sample.

There is considerable variation between disciplines in opinions on grading. Approximately half of the faculty see "great" variation in the meaning of a letter grade between disciplines. Those disciplines that

emphasize factual and cumulative course content tend to maintain that they grade lower than other disciplines, emphasize written tests and quizzes as factors in assigning grades, and express confidence in the letter-based grading system. Those faculty members in fine arts, education, and health express less confidence in the conventional grading system, hold that a 'B' grade reflects average performance and use non-quantifiable factors, such as attitude and effort, in assigning student grades.

The association of seniority (rank, age, years teaching in higher education, and highest degree) with grading practices indicates that as seniority increases, there is a decreased adjustment of course material each quarter. The lower seniority groups have fewer opinions about grading practices and standards than faculty with more seniority.

This study provides additional evidence that grading practices and standards are very strongly influenced by academic discipline. Thus, grading is not a result of the haphazard practices of individual faculty members but is rather a reflection of the composition of the curriculum by different disciplines.

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Appendix A

Survey Instrument

FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire samples opinions on both undergraduate and graduate grading. Fill in the responses only for the level you teach. If you teach both undergraduate and graduate courses, please fill in the appropriate responses for both categories.

GRADE PRACTICES AND PHILOSOPHIES

1. Please rank the following factors in the order they contribute to a student's final grade that you assign: Rank each factor from most to least important, numbering respectively from 1 to 6.

	UNDERGRADUATE	GRADUATE	
1. tests and quizzes	[ ]	[ ]	(7-12)
2. written assignments	[ ]	[ ]	
3. class participation	[ ]	[ ]	
4. attitude and effort	[ ]	[ ]	
5. final examinations	[ ]	[ ]	
6. attendance	[ ]	[ ]	

2. What type of class presentation do you primarily use? Write in the appropriate response number:
   1. lecture
   2. discussion
   3. laboratory
   4. other

   [ ] [ ] (13-14)

3. Which of the following systems do you use most often in assigning students' grades?
   1. Absolute scale - where each student's performance is judged as a definite percent of perfection of achievement and is independent of the performance of other students. It is possible for every student to receive an excellent rating.
   2. Relative scale - where each student's performance is judged in relation to that of other students. This sytem is based on the normal distribution curve, and is often referred to as "grading on the curve".
   3. Peer scale - where each student's performance is judged by the student and classmates.
   4. Other - specify: _____

   [ ] [ ] (15-16)

4. Which grading system would you propose be utilized at Georgia State University?
   1. conventional grading system
   2. pass - fail system
   3. no grading system
   4. other - specify: _____

   [ ] [ ] (17-18)

5. Estimate the percent of your grade that is based upon:

	UNDERGRADUATE	GRADUATE	
objective criteria	[%]	[%]	(19-22)
subjective criteria	[%]	[%]	
	100 %	100 %	

For questions 6 - 8, write in one of the following response numbers:
1. much lower
2. lower
3. about the same
4. higher
5. much higher
6. don't know

	UNDERGRADUATE	GRADUATE	
6. How do grades in your discipline compare with those of other disciplines at Georgia State?	[ ]	[ ]	(23-24)
7. How do your grades compare with the grades of other faculty members who teach the same discipline at Georgia State?	[ ]	[ ]	(25-26)
8. How do your grades compare with the grades of faculty members in other disciplines at Georgia State?	[ ]	[ ]	(27-28)

For questions 9 - 10, write in one of the following response numbers:
1. none
2. little
3. some
4. greatly
5. don't know

9. To what extent do you think the meaning of a letter grade varies within your discipline?	[ ]	[ ]	(29-30)
10. To what extent do you think the meaning of a letter grade varies between disciplines at Georgia State?	[ ]	[ ]	(31-32)

For questions 11 - 22, write in one of the following response numbers:
1. strongly agree
2. agree
3. no opinion
4. disagree
5. strongly disagree

11. Students at Georgia State are a heterogeneous group in academic ability.	[ ]	[ ]	(33-34)
12. The grades I assign accurately reflect the level of knowledge a student has attained.	[ ]	[ ]	(35-36)
13. A B grade means [illegible] average performance.	[ ]	[ ]	(37-38)
14. A department must have set standards of performance.	[ ]	[ ]	(39-40)
15. I conceive of knowledge as a process.	[ ]	[ ]	(41-42)
16. I conceive of knowledge as a product.	[ ]	[ ]	(43-44)
17. Each quarter I adjust the content and level of academic material to the nature and level of the students enrolled.	[ ]	[ ]	(45-46)
18. I do not believe grades adequately reflect a student's ability.	[ ]	[ ]	(47-48)
19. Students at Georgia State are an average university group on the basis of performance.	[ ]	[ ]	(49-50)
20. I would like to do away with the present grading structure.	[ ]	[ ]	(51-52)
21. A primary purpose of grading is to motivate students.	[ ]	[ ]	(53-54)
22. A primary purpose of grading is to describe performance levels to students.	[ ]	[ ]	(55-56)

DEMOGRAPHIC AND ACADEMIC INFORMATION

1. Discipline:
   - Business & Commerce 1.[ ]
   - Urban Studies 2.[ ] (57)
   - Education 3.[ ]
   - Fine Arts 4.[ ]
   - Health Professions & Svcs. 5.[ ]
   - Letters & Languages 6.[ ]
   - Natural & Physical Sciences 7.[ ]
   - Social Sciences 8.[ ]
   - Other 9.[ ]

2. Rank:
   - Professor 1.[ ] (58)
   - Associate Professor 2.[ ]
   - Assistant Professor 3.[ ]
   - Instructor 4.[ ]
   - Graduate Teaching Assistant 5.[ ]
   - Part-time Faculty 6.[ ]

3. Years Teaching in Higher Education:

	UG	G	
less than 1 year	1.[ ]	[ ]	(59-60)
1 - 2 years	2.[ ]	[ ]	
3 - 4 years	3.[ ]	[ ]	
5 - 6 years	4.[ ]	[ ]	
7 - 9 years	5.[ ]	[ ]	
10 - 14 years	6.[ ]	[ ]	
15 - 19 years	7.[ ]	[ ]	
20+ years	8.[ ]	[ ]	

4. Tenured 1.[ ] (61)
   Not tenured 2.[ ]

5. Age:
   - 29 & under 1.[ ]
   - 30 - 34 2.[ ] (62)
   - 35 - 39 3.[ ]
   - 40 - 49 4.[ ]
   - 50 - 59 5.[ ]
   - 60+ 6.[ ]

6. Sex:
   - Male 1.[ ]
   - Female 2.[ ] (63)

7. Highest Degree:
   - Doctorate 1[ ]
   - First Professional 2[ ]
   - Masters 3[ ] (64)
   - Bachelors 4[ ]
   - Others 5[ ]

PLEASE MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON GRADING ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS PAGE. YOUR COOPERATION IN THIS SURVEY IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.

COMMENCEMENT QUESTIONS ON THE REVERSE SIDE.

FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

COMMENCEMENT

Commencement is currently held four times a year, on a Saturday morning following final exams. Please check your preference for the scheduling of commencement.

(65) 1 ( ) Saturday
2 ( ) Sunday
3 ( ) Weekday, Specify: _____

(66) 1 ( ) Morning
2 ( ) Afternoon
3 ( ) Evening

(67) 1 ( ) the week before final exams
2 ( ) on the same schedule as presently used
3 ( ) the week after final exams
4 ( ) on a day after the next quarter begins

(68) 1 ( ) 4 commencements per year
2 ( ) 2 commencements
3 ( ) 1 commencement

Would you prefer two class rolls per class, one for graduating students and one for non-graduating students, or would you prefer one consolidated class roll?

(69) 1 ( ) 2 class rolls
2 ( ) 1 consolidated roll

College

(70) 1 ( ) Allied Health Sciences
2 ( ) Arts & Sciences
3 ( ) Business Administration
4 ( ) Developmental Studies
5 ( ) Education
6 ( ) General Studies
7 ( ) Institute of Government Administration
8 ( ) Urban Life

PLEASE MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON COMMENCEMENT IN THE SPACE TO THE RIGHT.

GRADING QUESTIONS ON THE REVERSE SIDE.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON GRADING

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON COMMENCEMENT

Appendix B

Faculty Demographic Characteristics

TABLE B - 1
FACULTY DISCIPLINE BY SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
PERCENTAGES

	Total	Business & Commerce	Education	Fine Arts	Health	Letters & Languages	Natural & Physical Sciences	Social Sciences	X^2	df	p
Rank									69.2	30	<.0001
Professor	20	27	21	22	5	11	23	20			
Associate Professor	30	26	34	22	30	30	38	28			
Assistant Professor	25	19	25	22	49	23	26	24			
Instructor	5	5	8	16	14	4	0	1			
Graduate Teaching Asst.	10	15	8	3	0	16	4	11			
Part-time Faculty	10	8	3	16	3	16	9	16			
N	511	139	96	32	37	56	47	104			
Years Teaching in Undergraduate Higher Education									64.4	42	.01
Less than 1 year	7	8	10	7	3	4	2	10			
1-2 years	8	11	9	0	8	11	9	7			
3-4 years	14	13	14	19	18	7	9	17			
5-6 years	16	16	16	16	37	11	3	23			
7-9 years	18	19	17	19	18	23	16	15			
10-14 years	19	20	17	16	13	21	33	14			
15-19 years	9	3	12	10	3	9	22	14			
20+ years	9	11	12	13	0	14	4	8			
N	463	133	58	31	38	56	45	102			
Years Teaching in Graduate Higher Education									70.7	42	.004
Less than 1 year	6	4	10	5		9	6	3			
1-2 years	9	4	11	5		0	6	16			
3-4 years	14	10	14	15		22	9	16			
5-6 years	15	20	14	40		22	3	7			
7-9 years	24	28	21	20		26	26	21			
10-14 years	21	17	21	10		9	43	23			
15-19 years	8	7	6	5		13	9	11			
20+ years	4	10	3	0		0	0	3			
N	334	92	89	20	5	23	35	70			
Tenure									12.9	6	.04
Tenured	48	49	56	45	28	37	60	48			
Not Tenured	52	51	44	55	72	63	40	52			
N	479	129	95	31	36	51	42	95			
Age									45.1	30	.04
29 and Under	11	10	5	19	17	8	2	19			
30-34	22	21	25	13	17	23	23	24			
35-39	21	21	25	16	31	17	30	12			
40-49	27	25	33	23	22	23	32	28			
50-59	16	19	9	26	14	30	9	14			
60 and Over	3	5	4	3	0	0	5	3			
N	485	130	94	31	36	53	44	97			
Sex									90.9	6	<.0001
Male	74	92	71	67	25	48	89	79			
Female	26	8	29	33	75	52	11	21			
N	479	131	90	30	36	52	44	96			
Highest Degree									84.9	24	<.0001
Doctorate	67	65	82	39	20	67	84	77			
First Professional	3	2	1	10	9	0	2	2			
Masters	29	32	14	52	69	33	14	21			
Bachelors	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0			
Other	1	0	2	0	3	0	0	0			
N	478	130	89	31	35	54	44	95			

Note: All columns may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

Appendix C

Selected Opinions of Faculty Teaching Undergraduate and Graduate Courses by Discipline

Selected Opinions of Faculty Teaching Undergraduate Courses by Discipline

	Total	Business and Commerce	Education	Fine Arts	Health Professions and Services	Letters and Languages	Natural and Physical Sciences	Social Sciences
1.a. Percent who consider tests and quizzes the most important factor in assigning a student's final grade:	58	66	33	26	67	30	83	71
b. Percent who consider written assignments the most important:	16	6	30	21	11	43	0	11
c. Percent who consider class participation the most important factor:	4	2	8	30	0	5	0	0
d. Percent who consider attitude and effort the most important factor:	3	3	2	17	0	0	2	2
e. Percent who consider final examinations the most important factor:	30	34	30	29	34	28	20	29
f. Percent who consider attendance the most important factor:	1	2	2	3	0	0	0	0
2.a. Percent who use lecture as the primary type of class presentation:	58	65	30	35	44	38	89	77
b. Percent who use discussion as the primary type of class presentation:	25	28	33	24	22	46	4	15
3. Percent who use the absolute scale most often in assigning a student's grade:	68	58	72	72	92	69	72	65
4. Percent who wish to retain the conventional grading system at Georgia State:	82	92	70	63	75	83	91	77
5. Percent who estimate that more than three-fourths of their final grade is based on objective criteria:	66	72	54	31	86	59	87	68
6.a. Percent who feel grades in their discipline are lower than grades in other disciplines:	29	41	9	16	11	16	65	28
b. Percent who feel grades in their discipline are higher than grades in other disciplines:	13	4	44	22	22	7	0	12
7.a. Percent who feel their own grades are lower than other grades assigned in their discipline:	21	17	30	12	11	24	24	27

Selected Opinions of Faculty Teaching Undergraduate Courses by Discipline

	Total	Business and Commerce	Education	Fine Arts	Health Professions and Services	Letters and Languages	Natural and Physical Sciences	Social Sciences
b. Percent who feel their own grades are higher than other grades assigned in their discipline:	8	9	6	6	6	4	7	10
8.a. Percent who feel their own grades are lower than grades assigned in other disciplines:	29	35	8	12	14	21	55	36
b. Percent who feel own grades are higher than grades assigned in other disciplines:	9	4	21	15	14	5	0	7
9. Percent who think the meaning of a letter grade varies "greatly" within their discipline at Georgia State:	22	19	29	22	22	23	13	31
10. Percent who think the meaning of a letter grade varies "greatly" between disciplines at Georgia State:	47	42	52	25	35	39	61	61
11. Percent who feel students at Georgia State are heterogeneous in ability:	85	87	86	62	78	82	89	92
12. Percent who feel that the grades they assign adequately reflect the level of knowledge a student has attained:	88	88	78	85	90	97	87	89
13. Percent who consider a 'B' grade means average performance:	16	18	23	28	17	7	4	10
14. Percent who feel a department should set standards of performance:	66	59	57	85	84	75	60	62
15. Percent who conceive of knowledge as a process:	81	79	89	78	86	78	69	81
16. Percent who conceive of knowledge as a product:	49	45	74	39	47	35	45	59
17. Percent who adjust the level and content of academic material each quarter to the nature and level of students enrolled:	38	38	60	37	39	36	28	34
18. Percent who do <u>not</u> believe grades adequately reflect a student's ability;	37	32	54	38	50	26	43	32

Selected Opinions of Faculty Teaching Undergraduate Courses by Discipline

	Total	Business and Commerce	Education	Fine Arts	Health Professions and Services	Letters and Languages	Natural and Physical Sciences	Social Sciences
19. Percent who feel students at Georgia are an average group on the basis of performance:	44	48	63	44	27	45	37	38
20. Percent who would like to do away with the present grading structure:	16	11	23	22	20	13	13	22
21. Percent who feel a primary purpose of grading is to motivate students:	43	50	39	31	52	46	39	38
22. Percent who feel a primary purpose of grading is to describe performance levels:	89	90	86	87	81	97	89	91
N =	463	133	58	31	38	56	45	102

Note: Because there were so few urban studies respondents, they are grouped with social sciences respondents.

Selected Opinions of Faculty Teaching Graduate Courses by Discipline

	Total	Business and Commerce	Education	Fine Arts	Letters and Languages	Natural and Physical Sciences	Social Sciences
1.a. Percent who consider tests and quizzes the most important factor in assigning a student's final grade:	35	43	27	15	18	77	24
b. Percent who consider written assignments the most important:	34	20	40	25	57	7	49
c. Percent who consider class participation the most important factor:	8	6	4	31	8	6	9
d. Percent who consider attitude and effort the most important factor:	4	4	5	20	0	3	0
e. Percent who consider final examinations the most important factor:	32	42	25	40	32	21	36
f. Percent who consider attendance the most important factor:	1	1	3	6	0	0	0
2.a. Percent who use lecture as the primary type of class presentation:	37	40	33	24	33	79	28
b. Percent who use discussion as the primary type of class presentation:	47	50	40	18	63	12	63
3. Percent who use the absolute scale most often in assigning a student's grade:	68	55	72	84	74	74	71
4. Percent who wish to retain the conventional grading system at Georgia State:	74	86	64	61	76	79	73
5. Percent who estimate that more than three-fourths of their final grade is based on objective criteria:	54	59	49	35	68	74	74
6.a. Percent who feel grades in their discipline are lower than grades in other disciplines:	26	37	9	11	24	61	23
b. Percent who feel grades in their discipline are higher than grades in other disciplines:	19	6	48	21	12	0	14
7.a. Percent who feel their own grades are lower than other grades assigned in their discipline:	20	17	30	11	8	15	22
b. Percent who feel their own grades are higher than other grades assigned in their discipline:	7	10	5	5	5	3	8

Selected Opinions of Faculty Teaching Graduate Courses by Discipline

	Total	Business and Commerce	Education	Fine Arts	Letters and Languages	Natural and Physical Sciences	Social Sciences
8.a. Percent who feel their own grades are lower than grades assigned in other disciplines:	31	33	14	11	28	65	39
b. Percent who feel own grades are higher than grades assigned in other disciplines:	11	4	23	26	8	0	6
9. Percent who think the meaning of a letter grade varies "greatly" within their discipline at Georgia State:	25	16	39	17	25	15	32
10. Percent who think the meaning of a letter grade varies "greatly" between disciplines at Georgia State:	51	38	61	17	46	62	65
11. Percent who feel students at Georgia State are heterogeneous in ability:	88	84	86	47	88	88	86
12. Percent who feel that the grades they assign adequately reflect the level of knowledge a student has attained:	88	90	81	84	86	86	91
13. Percent who consider a 'B' grade means average performance:	53	51	58	47	46	32	59
14. Percent who feel a department should set standards of performance:	62	57	60	84	56	58	62
15. Percent who conceive of knowledge as a process:	80	82	88	74	65	71	76
16. Percent who conceive of knowledge as a product:	52	35	72	45	43	44	64
17. Percent who adjust the level and content of academic material each quarter to the nature and level of students enrolled:	40	40	52	47	34	32	27
18. Percent who do <u>not</u> believe grades adequately reflect a student's ability:	35	30	52	32	17	41	25
19. Percent who feel students at Georgia State are an average group on the basis of performance:	46	48	56	52	39	32	36
20. Percent who would like to do away with the present grading structure:	21	19	28	34	21	12	19

Selected Opinions of Faculty Teaching Graduate Courses by Discipline

	Total	Business and Commerce	Education	Fine Arts	Letters and Languages	Natural and Physical Sciences	Social Sciences
21. Percent who feel a primary purpose of grading is to motivate students:	41	54	30	32	37	50	37
22. Percent who feel a primary purpose of grading is to describe performance levels:	86	87	84	89	92	89	90
N=	334	92	89	20	23	35	70

Note: Urban Studies respondents were grouped with Social Science respondents. There were so few faculty teaching graduate Health courses (N=5) that percentages would be misleading. They have been deleted from the analysis.

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Appendix D

Directory of Individual Cross-Tabulations On File in the Office of Institutional Planning

Appendix D

Directory of Individual Cross-Tabulations On File in the Office of Institutional Planning

Demographic Characteristics

Table B-1	Faculty Discipline by Selected Demographic Characteristics
B-2	Faculty Rank by Selected Demographic Characteristics
B-3	Faculty Tenure by Selected Demographic Characteristics
B-4	Faculty Age by Selected Demographic Characteristics
B-5	Faculty Sex by Selected Demographic Characteristics
B-6	Faculty Highest Degree Earned by Selected Demographic Characteristics
B-7	Years Teaching in Undergraduate Higher Education by Selected Demographic Characteristics

Undergraduate Course Grading

Table C-1	Survey Question 1.a.	: Importance of tests and quizzes in assigning a final grade.
Table C-2	Survey Question 1.b.	: Importance of written assignments in assigning a final grade.
Table C-3	Survey Question 1.c.	: Importance of class participation in assigning a final grade.
Table C-4	Survey Question 1.d.	: Importance of attitude and effort in assigning a final grade.
Table C-5	Survey Question 1.e.	: Importance of final examination in assigning a final grade.
Table C-6	Survey Question 1.f.	: Importance of attendance in assigning a final grade.
Table C-7	Survey Question 2.	: Primary type of class presentation.
Table C-8	Survey Question 3.	: Type of grading scale used.
Table C-9	Survey Question 4.	: Type of grading system proposed.
Table C-10	Survey Question 5.	: Percent of final grade based on objective criteria.
Table C-11	Survey Question 6.	: How do grades in your discipline compare with those in other disciplines at Georgia State?
Table C-12	Survey Question 7.	: How do your grades compare with other grades in your disciplines at Georgia State?
Table C-13	Survey Question 8.	: How do your grades compare with grades in other disciplines at Georgia State?
Table C-14	Survey Question 9.	: To what extent does the meaning of a letter grade vary within your disciplines?
Table C-15	Survey Question 10.	: To what extent does the meaning of a letter grade vary between disciplines of Georgia State?
Table C-16	Survey Question 11.	: Students at Georgia State are a heterogeneous group in academic ability.

Table C-17	Survey Question 12.	: The grades I assign adequately reflect the level of knowledge a student has attained.
Table C-18	Survey Question 13.	: A 'B' grade means to me average performance
Table C-19	Survey Question 14.	: A department must have set standards of performance.
Table C-20	Survey Question 15.	: I conceive of knowledge as a process.
Table C-21	Survey Question 16.	: I conceive of knowledge as a product.
Table C-22	Survey Question 17.	: Each quarter I adjust the content and level of the academic material to the nature and level of the students enrolled.
Table C-23	Survey Question 18.	: I do not believe grades adequately reflect a student's ability.
Table C-24	Survey Question 19.	: Students at Georgia State are an average university group on the basis of performance.
Table C-25	Survey Question 20.	: I would like to do away with the present grading structure.
Table C-26	Survey Question 21.	: A primary purpose of grading is to motivate students.
Table C-27	Survey Question 22.	: A primary purpose of grading is to describe performance levels for students.

Graduate Course Grading

Table D-1	Survey Question 1.a.	: Importance of tests and quizzes in assigning a final grade.
Table D-2	Survey Question 1.b.	: Importance of written assignments in assigning a final grade.
Table D-3	Survey Question 1.c.	: Importance of class participation in assigning a final grade.
Table D-4	Survey Question 1.d.	: Importance of attitude and effort in assigning a final grade.
Table D-5	Survey Question 1.e.	: Importance of final examination in assigning a final grade.
Table D-6	Survey Question 1.f.	: Importance of attendance in assigning a final grade.
Table D-7	Survey Question 2.	: Primary type of class presentation.
Table D-8	Survey Question 3.	: Type of grading scale used.
Table D-9	Survey Question 4.	: Type of grading system proposed.
Table D-10	Survey Question 5.	: Percent of final grade based on objective criteria.
Table D-11	Survey Question 6.	: How do grades in your discipline compare with those in other disciplines at Georgia State?
Table D-12	Survey Question 7.	: How do your grades compare with other grades in your disciplines at Georgia State?
Table D-13	Survey Question 8.	: How do your grades compare with grades in other disciplines at Georgia State?
Table D-14	Survey Question 9.	: To what extent does the meaning of a letter grade vary within your disciplines?

Table D-15	Survey Question 10.	:	To what extent does the meaning of a letter grade vary between disciplines of Georgia State?
Table D-16	Survey Question 11.	:	Students at Georgia State are a heterogeneous group in academic ability.
Table D-17	Survey Question 12.	:	The grades I assign adequately reflect the level of knowledge a student has attained.
Table D-18	Survey Question 13.	:	A 'B' grade means to me average performance.
Table D-19	Survey Question 14.	:	A department must have set standards of performance.
Table D-20	Survey Question 15.	:	I conceive of knowledge as a process.
Table D-21	Survey Question 16.	:	I conceive of knowledge as a product.
Table D-22	Survey Question 17.	:	Each quarter I adjust the content and level of the academic material to the nature and level of the students enrolled.
Table D-23	Survey Question 18.	:	I do not believe grades adequately reflect a student's ability.
Table D-24	Survey Question 19.	:	Students at Georgia State are an average university group on the basis of performance
Table D-25	Survey Question 20.	:	I would like to do away with the present grading structure.
Table D-26	Survey Question 21.	:	A primary purpose of grading is to motivate students.
Table D-27	Survey Question 22.	:	A primary purpose of grading is to describe performance levels for students.

Written Comments of the Faculty